

Some Pictures of Night Life In the Slums of Panama

BY JOHN ELPRETH WATKINS.

Can the sea serpent be longer denied? Is he the remnant of a monstrous species supposedly extinct, or some adventurer from the deep sea of a modern race of leviathans as yet undiscovered by science?

Such queries I have been flinging at some distinguished naturalists, with widely varying results, which I shall proceed to report at once, especially inasmuch as my investigation brings to light the scientifically established fact that August is our sea serpent month par excellence.

"I incline rather to belief than to unbelief in the monster," Director Frederick A. Lucas of the American Museum of Natural History told me. "The biggest sea serpents we know of lived in the eocene period," says he. "Take, for instance, the zeuglodon. He would tally perfectly with some of the most sensational sea serpent descriptions which we hear year after year. The zeuglodon grew as large as seventy feet in length and eight feet in diameter. His head was small and pointed. His jaws were well armed with grasping and cutting teeth. Just back of his head he carried a pair of short paddles, not unlike those of a fur seal.

"He must have reared at least a third of his great bulk out of the water, to take a comprehensive view of the surroundings. His tail must have propelled him at a speed of from twenty to thirty miles an hour.

"Zeuglodon was once very numerous in the Gulf of Mexico, also the old seas of Southern Europe. They have been called 'whalelike king lizards,' but in reality were mammals, not reptiles. The zeuglodon is usually thought to be the ancestor of the whale, but I think he died without issue."

Still Exists—Why Not?

"There is no apparent inherent impossibility that the zeuglodon does exist today. But we don't find him—that is all. It is a fish of such ancient lineage as the gar pike—going back to the days when the zeuglodon flourished—is so common as to be a nuisance, why may there not be a few zeuglodon, plesiosaurs or mosasaurs somewhere in the depth of the ocean?"

"One recent sea serpent story in which Director Lucas takes some stock is that of the captain of the British ship *Fly*, who states that while he was in the Gulf of California, in twelve fathoms of remarkably clear water, he saw crawling over the bottom an extraordinary lizard-like monster, with long, serpentine neck, short tail and four flippers, like those of a turtle. The naturalist regards it as remarkable, to say the least, that this skipper, who doubtless had never heard of a plesiosaur, should thus describe one with amazing accuracy, both as to form and probable habit. The director regards it as just as possible for the plesiosaur to survive as for some of our sharks, which date back to the same geologic period. Some naturalists have estimated that these monstrous, reptile-headed, duck-necked marlin lizards grew to be 100 feet in length and had eyes a yard in diameter. And, in Mr. Lucas's opinion, there is no more reason for admitting the survival of the plesiosaur than for assuming that a zeuglodon and the most distant relative, the elasmosaur, still live.

Terrible Giant Lizards.

In the accompanying group of three gigantic sea lizards you will perceive in the left foreground this terrible elasmosaur, the most colossal and most serpentine of all that ancient group. With its whalelike body, long and flexible neck, short paddles and serpentine tail, it would seem well to popular descriptions of the sea serpent. Its tremendous size is attested by its vertebrae, some of which, now preserved, are nearly as large as those of the elephant. In the right background of the picture is its cousin, the mosasaur, of which we know less than of the elasmosaur, known to have inhabited this part of the world, six having been found in New Jersey. This terrible sea lizard attained a length of forty feet. Its head was flat and pointed and its lower jaw was provided with an attachment of cartilage by which it could open its mouth to an enormous extent in the same manner as the modern snake. The central figure in this group is another of these creatures known as the laelops, a great kangaroo-like lizard which frequented the land.

"There are no monster sea serpents," was the emphatic reply of Dr. Theodore N. Gill, the distinguished ichthyologist of the Smithsonian Institution. There is no animal of gigantic size now living in the sea which could be properly classed as a serpent, or even a reptile. It is possible that a great saurian related to the trilobite, and which may be found in the sea. This would have an eel-like body, a fin back of the head and, if very long, would agree to some extent with descriptions of the 'great sea serpent.' As a matter of fact, there was discovered no many years ago a fossil eel-like shark, resembling the great sharks found in the Pacific.

Dr. Gill regarded the survival of a zeuglodon or of such a monster sea lizard as a plesiosaur, after many millions of years, as a possibility. "The probability that any one will ever see the sight of such a possibility. Yet many able scientists, including Agassiz, have said that such a creature as the plesiosaur may still survive."

Mostly Real Creatures.
"Do you regard all reports of monster sea serpents as elements of the imagination?" I asked Dr. Gill. "Most of the wonderful creatures made the subject of sea serpent stories doubtless are living animals of some sort," he replied. "I will give some examples. Let us dispose of one of the most conspicuous pictures of the sea serpent yet printed. This is from a work by Erik Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, Norway, who wrote more



Is it a remnant of one of these monstrous species? Elasmosaur (left), Mosasaur (right), Lucelaps (centre).

Bishop Pontoppidan's Sea Serpent, Probably a Giant Squid.

than a century and a half ago describing giant sea serpents and mermaids, which he believed really existed. He being a godly man, should not be distrusted entirely.

"This monster was represented with its front portion out of water and as having a large frill about its neck. Its tail was long and tapering, and ended in a spiral curve. From its mouth issued a jet of water or vapor. Now certainly, such a form does not exist, but what was it?"

"Well, now let's look at the cuttlefish or squid. Some of these have been found as long as sixty feet. The tail of such a giant cuttlefish may have been taken for the head of this monster serpent, the fins of the tail corresponding to the frills described. The spiral tail might easily have been one of the great cuttlefish's curved arms appearing out of water, and the jet of water might have been the siphon of the cuttlefish, by which it propels itself in the water. How much imagination would be required to add the unreasonable features of this picture?"

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"What would be the effect upon the imagination of a person who should see one of these fellows diving among the billows. Why he would come home with the most outlandish sea serpent stories you ever heard."

A Successful Hunt.
What proved for a time to be the most successful sea serpent hunt on record, according to Dr. Gill, was perpetrated in New York by a pseudoscientist, Dr. Albert C. Koch, in 1845. He exhibited on Broadway the skeleton of an alleged fossil monster which he named the "hydrarchus," or "sea king."

The remains, including the head and vertebrae, measured no less than 11 feet over all, and the people of New York, as well as of other American cities, visited, were greatly excited over the discovery of tangible proof that the long-suspected sea serpent existed. But finally Professor Wyman, a naturalist of considerable circumspection, examined the skeleton and discovered it to be a composite, including the bones of several zeuglodon strung together. When last heard of by Dr. Gill, this "sea serpent" was sold by Koch to the museum of Dresden. The accompanying photograph of the skeleton of a zeuglodon properly mounted has been furnished me by Dr. Gill, and was made from the unequalled specimen obtained by the Smithsonian some time ago from our southern coast. Mixed with these bones when dug up were the shell of a turtle three feet long and part of the backbone of a water snake, which in life must have measured twenty-five feet from head to tail. If this great zeuglodon were alive it would very nicely fit many popular descriptions of the "sea serpent."

Fisheries Bureau Hunts Monster.
The Federal Bureau of Fisheries has been hunting the sea serpent ever since it was founded. Its second officer in command, Dr. Hugh M. Smith, United States deputy commissioner of fisheries, told me yesterday that he has personally followed to their lairs two or three of the most horrible of these creatures.

"One was a monster found drifting some years ago in Nantucket Sound, in the vicinity of Hyannis, Mass. It having been described at great length by the Boston papers, Dr. Smith, then at the fisheries laboratory at Woods Hole, nearby, proceeded to investigate it.

He says he found the monster in a marsh, where it had lodged after having been turned adrift by the fishermen who had caught it. It was both horrible and grotesque to behold, indeed—a large, badly decomposed shark, whose skin had fallen away from parts of the ribs, leaving only stumps, which suggested feet.

The second sea serpent investigated



SKELETON OF ZEUGLON.

by Dr. Smith was, he said, exhibited upon a pier at Atlantic City in July, 1894. It was advertised as "a genuine sea serpent," and sensational accounts of its behavior before falling a victim to the brave fishermen who caught it were published. Dr. Smith found it to consist of an imperfect skeleton, about ten and one-half feet long, stretched at full length upon a plank. The parts present were a skull, stumps of fins and a backbone, which, with a short section missing from the tail end, contained 274 vertebrae. The creature appeared so hideous and monstrous to some scribes assigned to the story that they hinted in their papers that the "serpent" was not a bona-fide, but a manufactured product.

Dr. Smith discovered that the carcass had been snatched by a line fisherman a few miles off Atlantic City. But as the specimen was a passing attraction, it could not be obtained for study. However, Dr. Smith made a series of drawings and photographs of detailed portions of the skeleton, and these, with several vertebrae, he brought to the Smithsonian Institution and submitted to Dr. Gill, the above-quoted, who lost no time in identifying the "monster" as a thresher shark.

The third monster investigated by Dr. Smith was a huge, serpentine creature seen floating in Long Island sound some summers ago, by thousands of excursionists. It proved to be the carcass of a huge python, which had died on board a ship from the East Indies. After having been skinned, it was thrown overboard.

Sea Serpents' Enemies Weakening.
While scientists are not in accord on the question, Dr. Smith thinks that some circumstantial evidence recently gathered "well perhaps weaken the belief of some intelligent persons who have heretofore denied the possibility of the existence at this day of marine monsters comparable to those of geological times."

However, this may be, he said, there are now in the seas well known members of the fish class large enough to be regarded as monsters and to afford the basis of some sea serpent stories. Among these are not only the big sharks mentioned by Dr. Gill, but such creatures as the skate-like, bat-shaped, two-horned "devil-fish" or "ocean vampire," a giant ray, which ventures as far north in Atlantic waters as Cape May, and which attains a weight of six tons, also a breadth of thirty feet; the ocean sunfish, of both Atlantic and Pacific waters, found weighing as much as 1,800 pounds; the "luna," or "great tunny" or "horse mackerel," also of both oceans, which reaches 1,500 pounds in weight, and fifteen feet in length; the sawfish, which grows to over twenty feet long.

Such of these creatures as science has seen have been found dead or dying at the surface of the water, and zoologists have shown no activity in finding their lairs.

"This suggests," said Dr. Smith, "how fragmentary must be our knowledge of

DR. THEODORE N. GILL.

DR. KOCH'S "HYDRARCHUS," OR "SEA KING."

Does this survive? The Plesiosaur, a Marine Lizard, 100 feet long.

at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. Beauregard Webb, Rev. E. E. Hook officiating.

Mrs. Franklin, of Lynchburg, is expected today on a visit to her mother, Mrs. Isabella Scott, and her sister, Mrs. J. N. Williams.

Rev. H. W. Dunkley will leave Monday to assist in a meeting at Lynchburg, Va.

The Woman's Missionary Society of the Ridge Baptist Church of Rocky Mount will meet Monday.

Dr. George W. Divers and wife, of Buena Vista, are guests of their father, P. D. Divers.

Mrs. Mildred Lee Francis, of Norfolk, after visiting her uncle, Judge John P. Lee, went to Nassau last week to visit her aunt, Mrs. John P. Goerant. Mrs. Little Lee was also a guest at Nassau this week.

Mrs. Len Francis, of Norfolk, is a guest at the home of her aunt, Mrs. P. H. Dillard, for the remainder of the summer.

BON AIR

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Bon Air, Va., August 10.—Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Kennerly gave a most delightful dinner at the Inn. All the young people of the village were present, as well as a number of Richmond people. Dancing was indulged in till quite a late hour, and the familiar strains of "Home, Sweet Home" fell upon unwilling ears.

Mrs. Lillian Cooke has returned from a visit to Portsmouth. Carter Glass, Jr., of Lynchburg, has been visiting Ted McClure.

Mrs. Margaret McClure has gone to Montreal, N. C., to visit Miss Eleanor Pinkerton.

Mrs. Clara and Miss Sue Powers have gone to Montreal, N. C., for a visit of several weeks.

Mrs. Robert Christian was hostess last week of a charming garden party. The porches and lawns were decked with Japanese lanterns. Refreshments were served on the lawn and soft strains of music added much to the pleasure of the evening.

Mrs. Agnes Grist is the guest of the Misses Christian.

Mrs. Louise and McKenney Jones have been visiting Miss Nell Christian.

Mrs. Lillian Cooke has returned from a visit to her aunt, Judge John P. Lee, and is the guest of Mrs. David Allen.

One of the most enjoyable events of the week was a "bake party" given by the Bon Air Social Club. Those attending came in appropriate costume, and Mrs. Kennerly and Nathan Talcott were awarded the prizes.

Mrs. Juliet Talcott has been the guest of Mrs. David Allen.

Mrs. T. L. P. Cooke has returned from Chatham where she has been visiting her son.

Mrs. Mary Gering has been visiting Mrs. Cooke.

Mrs. Richardson and Miss Julia Eggleston are visiting Mrs. Robert Talcott.

Burton Marve and family have taken the Stiles cottage for the summer.

Mrs. Harriet Talcott has come to Stony Mountain for August.

Mrs. Virginia Potts, who has been visiting Miss Ayllie Wherry has returned to Ashland.

Mrs. Josie Kelly, of Norton, is the guest of Miss Lillian Cooke.

Beckles and Miss Ercelle Beckles have returned from a visit to Mrs. E. A. Gauding, of Hanover County.

Mrs. Overly, of Baltimore, has returned home after having spent the past week with her mother, Mrs. Camp, on Guinea Avenue.

Joseph T. Webber is spending his vacation in Norfolk.

Mrs. Schickel and three sons, Masters Riddell, Clinton and Allen Cabell, are spending the month of August at the home of her mother, in Louisa County.

"Lynchburg," the home of N. J. Roope, was the scene of a happy gathering last night at a watermelon feast given in honor of Mrs. Annie Onks, of Salisbury, Mass., a former schoolmate of Mr. Roope, who is visiting her sister, Mrs. Frederick Taylor, of Grove Avenue, Richmond.

Mrs. John McPherson Cooke, daughter of Mr. Roope, was hostess of the occasion. The table was laden with the fruits of the season, consisting largely of watermelons. Many of Mrs. Cooke's friends from Highland Springs and Richmond were present.

E. C. Gordin and E. F. Moore, the former of this village, and the latter of Richmond, have just returned from a business trip to Baltimore.

Miss Ida Sparks, of Baltimore, who is visiting her sister, Mrs. T. C. Gordin, at Edgewood, Highland Springs, will leave the middle of the week for home.

Miss Rose Littlepage and sister, Miss Norma Littlepage, accompanied by their father, Edwinton Littlepage, of Kings William County, were visitors at "Lynchburg" during the past week.

PAMPLIN

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Pamplin, Va., August 10.—Miss Kate M. Franklin is attending the lectures at Chautauqua.

Miss Annie H. Thornton left to-day for Petersburg, where she expects to spend some time with her aunt, Mrs. L. H. Thornton.

J. F. Connolly left Tuesday for Richmond on a visit to C. T. Watkins, at Edgewood. He was accompanied by Miss Alice Watkins and her sister, who had been spending some time here.

Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Bonham, Jr., of Baton Rouge, La., are visiting Mrs. P. T. V. Walker and family, who are visiting relatives in Mecklenburg County, Va.

Mrs. I. B. Longworth and her daughter, Miss Helen, of Lima, O., are spending a few weeks at "Good Hope," the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Longworth.

Miss Ethel Wyatt, of Lynchburg, stopped over for a short visit to Miss Florence Thornton, after a trip of several weeks during which she visited Boston, New York and several of the Northern cities.

Rev. J. H. Terry is at home for the summer from Crozet, Pa.

WAVELY

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Waverly, Va., August 10.—Mrs. A. E. Martin has returned to her home in Waverly, after spending ten days at Ocean View.

Miss Ruth Spratley left yesterday to join a house party in the mountains of Virginia.

Mr. and Mrs. V. C. Johnson have returned to Waverly, after spending a month in Norfolk.

Mrs. Rowe, of Fredericksburg, is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Chappell, on Main Street.

Mrs. T. E. Baird left for her home in Norfolk yesterday, after a week's stay in the home of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Baird, on East Main Street.

J. B. Martin has returned to Richmond to resume his studies at the Massanutten College.

Miss Ethel E. Egan, of Suffolk, is visiting her sister, Mrs. B. T. West, on Copperhunk Avenue.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Valten, of Washington, D. C., are the guests of Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Ford, on North Street.

Mr. L. O. Vaughan and daughter have returned here after a visit to friends in Bowling Green.

Juster A. Gray, after spending several weeks at Waverly, has returned to his home in Milton, Del.

Mrs. K. B. Hurt and daughter, Mary, are visiting relatives in Bowling Green.

Harold T. Tinsell and sons, Walter and Nathaniel, of Lawrenceville, are in Waverly.

Miss Estelle Fitchette is spending the summer with friends in Bedford City.

J. F. West, Jr., is spending his vacation in Ashville, N. C.

Miss Mary and her children are spending several weeks at Virginia Beach.

CARTERSVILLE

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Cartersville, Va., August 10.—Rev. J. M. Rowland, of Laurel Street Methodist Church, Richmond, preached an excellent sermon in the Cartersville Baptist Church Sunday night. He spoke of the interest of the Anti-Saloon League.

Mrs. Charlotte Muse, of North Carolina, is the guest of her sister, Mrs. J. Taylor, at the Baptist parsonage.

Miss Morrisette, of South Richmond, is visiting Miss Josephine Moon, of Farnworth.

Mrs. Thomas A. Groover has returned to her home in Washington, after a month's stay here. She was accompanied by Miss Victoria Rhodes and Willie Rhodes.

Mrs. and Mr. H. B. Isbell, of Richmond, are guests of Mrs. Katharine Duke near Cartersville.

Mrs. Virginia Davis, of Richmond, visited her relatives here recently.

Mr. Haden, of Richmond, was at Kila Road during the week.

Mrs. W. N. Rhodes and little daughter, Katharine, left Wednesday for Front Royal, where they will be the guests of Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Gee for several days.

Rev. J. R. Taylor, pastor of the Baptist Church, will begin a series of meetings at his church on August 13. There will be two services daily—afternoon and night.

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Some skins require constant grooming to keep them from becoming oily, muddy, blotchy or rough, or if such condition has developed, to overcome it. In such chronic cases it is particularly inadvisable to keep piling on cosmetics, which clog the pores, collect dust and dirt—especially in warm weather—making the complexion worse than ever. It's a lot more sensible to use ordinary mercurized wax, which literally absorbs a bad complexion. Apply the wax the cold cream before retiring; next morning, in washing it off, you'll find away fine, flour-like particles of the unsightly cuticle. Repeat for a week or more and you'll have an entirely new skin—soft, shiny, spotless and beautiful as a child's.

One ounce of mercurized wax, procurable in any drugstore, is all you'll need. If the skin be wrinkled or dabby, here's the best possible remedy: Mix 1 pint water and 1 ounce powdered salicylic acid and use as a face bath. It works like a miracle, yet is entirely harmless.

NEW

The new fall goods are beginning to come in, and among them are exceptionally fine pieces at the prices.

You are invited to drop in and look around. Our salesmen are courteous and well-informed. You are welcome, whether ready to buy or not. Come in.

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